

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Cancelled).

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) ~~An optical fiber drawing method according to Claim 1,~~
~~wherein~~ An optical fiber drawing method comprising steps of setting an optical fiber preform in
a furnace core tube and a preform container connected to an upper portion of the furnace core
tube and drawing an optical fiber from one end of said preform by heating and softening,
wherein:

an upper portion of said preform container is provided with an auxiliary heater and
cooling means for cooling said upper portion of said preform container, and said drawing step
includes adjusting a cooling quantity by said cooling means; and

said auxiliary heater is disposed movable relative to an outer wall of said preform
container and said adjustment of the cooling quantity by said cooling means includes adjustment
of a distance between the outer wall of said preform container and said auxiliary heater.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~An optical fiber drawing method according to Claim 1,~~
~~wherein~~ An optical fiber drawing method comprising steps of setting an optical fiber preform in
a furnace core tube and a preform container connected to an upper portion of the furnace core
tube and drawing an optical fiber from one end of said preform by heating and softening,
wherein:

an upper portion of said preform container is provided with an auxiliary heater and cooling means for cooling said upper portion of said preform container, and said drawing step includes adjusting a cooling quantity by said cooling means; and

said auxiliary heater is placed on an outer wall of said preform container, a heat insulator is disposed movable around the auxiliary heater, and said adjustment of the cooling quantity by said cooling means includes adjustment of a distance between the outer wall of said preform container and said heat insulator.

Claims 5-8. (Cancelled).

9. (Currently Amended) ~~An optical fiber drawing furnace according to Claim 7,~~An optical fiber drawing furnace comprising a furnace core tube through which a fiber preform penetrates vertically, a heater disposed around said furnace core tube, and a preform container connected to an upper portion of said furnace core tube so as to be integral with said furnace core tube to form a semi-closed space opening in part at a lower end, for housing said fiber preform inside,

said fiber drawing furnace further comprising:

an auxiliary heater disposed at an upper portion of said preform container;

cooling means for cooling the upper portion of said preform container; and

at least one temperature sensor for measuring an internal temperature in the upper portion of said preform container, wherein said cooling means includes a control unit for adjusting the cooling quantity, based on the temperature measured by said temperature sensor,

wherein said cooling means is air-providing means for supplying cooling air into clearance between said auxiliary heater and an outer wall of said preform container.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~An optical fiber drawing furnace according to Claim 7,~~An optical fiber drawing furnace comprising a furnace core tube through which a fiber preform penetrates vertically, a heater disposed around said furnace core tube, and a preform container connected to an upper portion of said furnace core tube so as to be integral with said furnace core tube to form a semi-closed space opening in part at a lower end, for housing said fiber preform inside,

said fiber drawing furnace further comprising:

an auxiliary heater disposed at an upper portion of said preform container;

cooling means for cooling the upper portion of said preform container; and

at least one temperature sensor for measuring an internal temperature in the upper portion of said preform container, wherein said cooling means includes a control unit for adjusting the cooling quantity, based on the temperature measured by said temperature sensor,

wherein said cooling means comprises heater moving means for moving said auxiliary heater to change a distance relative to said preform container.

11. (Original) An optical fiber drawing furnace according to Claim 10, further comprising air-providing means for supplying cooling air into clearance between said preform container and said auxiliary heater, created by movement of said auxiliary heater.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~An optical fiber drawing furnace according to Claim 7, An~~
optical fiber drawing furnace comprising a furnace core tube through which a fiber preform
penetrates vertically, a heater disposed around said furnace core tube, and a preform container
connected to an upper portion of said furnace core tube so as to be integral with said furnace core
tube to form a semi-closed space opening in part at a lower end, for housing said fiber preform
inside,

said fiber drawing furnace further comprising:

an auxiliary heater disposed at an upper portion of said preform container;

cooling means for cooling the upper portion of said preform container; and

at least one temperature sensor for measuring an internal temperature in the upper portion
of said preform container, wherein said cooling means includes a control unit for adjusting the
cooling quantity, based on the temperature measured by said temperature sensor,

wherein said auxiliary heater comprises a heating element and a heat insulator formed
around the heating element, said cooling means is insulator moving means for moving said heat
insulator to change a distance relative to said preform container.

13. (Original) An optical fiber drawing furnace according to Claim 12, further
comprising air-providing means for supplying cooling air into clearance between said heat
insulator and said auxiliary heater, created by movement of said heat insulator.

Claims 14-16. (Cancelled).